

REMARKS

Claims 21-40 are pending in this application. Claims 31-40 stand withdrawn.

By this Amendment, independent claims 21 and 29 are amended to recite additional features disclosed in the specification at, for example, page 5, line 7. No new matter is added. Reconsideration of the application is respectfully requested.

The Office Action rejects claims 21-23 and 25-30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent No. 6,004,521 to Miyoshi; rejects claims 21-28 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Patent No. 6,939,825 to Ohno; and rejects claims 29 and 30 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Ohno and Miyoshi. These rejections are respectfully traversed.

Independent claims 21 and 29 are amended to recite additional features, as outlined above. For example, claim 21 is amended to recite "a carrier having a monolithic honeycomb structure," "alumina is disposed on the cell wall surface of the carrier" and "90% by mass or more." Miyoshi and Ohno were not applied in the Office Action to reject claims 21 and 29 as currently amended. In fact, Miyoshi and Ohno do not disclose or render obvious the subject matter recited in the claims, as amended.

For example, Ohno does not disclose that "alumina is disposed on the cell wall surface of the carrier," where the carrier has a monolithic honeycomb structure, as recited in claim 21, and similarly recited in claim 29. Ohno discloses covering particles of silicon-containing ceramic material by a film of alumina to form a chemical bond of Si fed from SiC for attaining high adhesion property without peeling. See col. 6, lines 27-36 of Ohno. Ohno does not disclose alumina disposed on the cell wall surface of a monolithic honeycomb structure. Also, Miyoshi does not cure the deficiencies of Ohno.

For another example, Miyoshi and Ohno do not disclose "90% by mass or more" recited in claims 21 and 29, as amended. Miyoshi's alumina porous layer 3 is formed in the loading process A of Example 1. The porous layer 3 of alumina is formed in an amount of

100g with respect to 1 liter of the support. Pt was loaded in an amount of 1.0 g/L and Ba was also loaded in an amount of 0.2mol/L with respect to 1 liter of the support. See col. 6, line 65 - col. 7, line 4 and Table 1 of Miyoshi. The porous layer 3 of 100g with respect to 1 liter of the support comprises alumina of 72g, Pt of 1.0 g and Ba of 27g. Thus, the porous layer 3 only contains 72 % of alumina. Therefore, the porous layer 3 in Miyoshi does not include alumina of 90 % by mass or more, as recited in claims 21 and 29. Also, Ohno does not cure the deficiencies of Miyoshi.

Furthermore, there is no disclosure of high density alumina in Miyoshi. The high density derived from high concentration alumina is attained in the present application, as is described in page 5, lines 6-10 of the present specification. Also, the alumina powder without supporting Pt-Ba in the present application corresponds to those used in the Comparative Examples in Miyoshi.

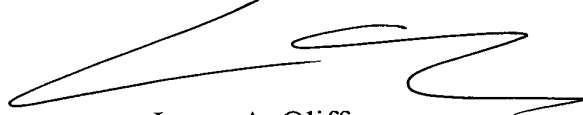
On the other hand, the alumina porous layer 3 in Miyoshi requires alumina powder with Pt and Ba loaded because Miyoshi aims to dispersing Pt uniformly in a catalyst layer. Thus, the alumina porous layer 3 of Miyoshi is merely a catalyst layer, and does not disclose the precoat layer in the present application.

For at least the above reasons, Miyoshi and Ohno, whether individually or in combination, do not disclose or render obvious the subject matter recited in claims 21 and 29, and claims 22-28 and 30, depending therefrom. Accordingly, withdrawal of the rejection of claims 21-30 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b), §102(e) and §103(a) is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 21-40 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachment:
Request for Continued Examination

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